REMARKS

Claims 1-31 are presented for consideration in this application.

Examiner Interview

Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for the telephonic interview on November 22, 2004. During the interview, applicants explained the distinguishing aspects of claims. No agreement was reached as to the allowability of claims.

Rejections under USC §102(e)

3. Claims 1-4, 7-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Steele et al. (US 2002/0136167 Al). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

To anticipate a claim, the reference must teach each and every element of the claim. *See* MPEP §2131. Steele et al. do not teach each and every element of rejected claims. As to claim 1, the Examiner has cited element 16 as network node, element 18 as master communication loop, and elements 24 and 20 as two modems as recited in claim 1. Applicants respectfully disagree with this correlation.

First, element 18 of Steele et al. is an Internet cloud. According to Steele et al., the element 18 is a network including "at least two (and preferably more) computers interconnected together so that communication between them is possible." (Paragraph 0025, emphasis added). Further, in rejecting claim 3 and citing paragraph 0032 of Steele et al., referring to the element 18 the Examiner has stated that "the master communication loop comprises a twisted pair of conductors." Applicants would like to respectfully point to the Examiner that a twisted pair of conductors cannot replace "at least two (and preferably more) computers interconnected together so that communication between them is possible." Furthermore, in the cited sections, Steele et al. describe connection of element 20 to the network 18 itself via various communication mean. Thus, either element 20 is connected to the network 18 via a twisted pair of conductors or the network 18 itself is a twisted pair of conductors. In this case, as explained by Steele et al. in paragraph 0032, the client computer 20 is connected to the network via various communication

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means and the network 18 is a network of at least two computers. Thus, multiple computers connected together cannot anticipate a master communication loop as recited in claim 1.

Second, element 16 is a shared network resource (customer website) along with a session server 12 and a web server 14 that provide services for multiple parties (paragraph 0023). Element 24 is an agent computer within a call center 22. Each agent computer 24 is connected to the network via its own link (see figure 1). Thus, according to the Examiner, if element 16 is a network node, then element 20 independently accesses the network resource 16 via its own connection to the internet 18 and similarly, agent computer 24 independently accesses element 16 via its own connection to the internet 18. Therefore, Steele et al. do not anticipate each and every element of claim 1 and those depending therefrom. According, claim 1 and those depending therefrom are clearly and patentably distinguishable from Steele et al.

Claim 2 depends from claim 1 and is patentably distinguishable from Steele et al. for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

As to claim 3, as explained above, Steele et al. defines the network 18 as at least two computers interconnected and not a twisted pair of conductors.

With regard to claim 4, the network node as identified by the Examiner (element 16) is not configured to control communication between various elements. According to Steele et al., element 16 is a shared network resource (*see* paragraph 0023) and Steele et al. do not describe shared network resources as adapted to permit and enable communication between various terminals. Accordingly, claim 4 is further patentably distinguishable from Steele et al.

Claims 7-8 depend from claim 1 and are patentably distinguishable from Steele et al. for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

As to claim 9, the Examiner has identified a central office (CO) as a network node located remote from the first and second terminal. Applicants would like respectfully point to the Examiner that in rejecting claim 1, the Examiner has cited a shared network resource (customer website 16) as the network node; however, in rejecting claim 9, the Examiner is citing a central office, which is not described by Steele et al., as a network node. Further, in the cited

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section, paragraph 0030, Steele et al. actually describe the function of a customer service center or a call center 22, which is not a central office as understood by those skilled in the art. Accordingly, Claim 9 is further patentably distinguishable from Steele, et al.

Claim 10 depends from claim 1 and is patentably distinguishable from Steele et al. for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Claim 11 and those depend therefrom have been rejected in the manner of claim 1. Accordingly, claim 11 and those depend therefrom are patentably distinguishable from Steele et al. for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Rejections under USC §103(a)

Claims 5, 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Steele et al. (US 2002/0136167 Al) as applied to claim 4 above, and further in view of Miao et al. (US Patent 6,279,022 B1). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

First, claims 5 and 6 depend from claim 1, which has been distinguished from Steele et al. for failing to disclose each and every element of claim 1. Therefore, the combination of Steele et al. and Miao et al. cannot render claims 5 and 6 obvious.

Second, Steele et al. is directed to multimedia collaboration between remote parties regardless of underlying communication framework and Miao et al. is directed to synchronizing symbol boundaries in multi-carrier transmission systems. There is no motivation for one skilled in the art to combine the disclosure of the cited references.

Finally, as to claim 6, the Examiner has two different elements, shared network resource 16 (customer website) and an undisclosed central office as network nodes. Thus, it is not clear, which element the Examiner is considering as the network node for claim 6. Further, neither of these elements has been described by Steele et al. to be able to control the communication aspects of terminals in the network 10. Therefore, the disclosure of Miao et al. cannot be combined with Steele et al., which does not provide means for controlling various terminals in

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the network 10. Accordingly, claims 5-6 are further patentably distinguishable from the combination of cited references.

Claims 14-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Steele et al. (US 2002/0136167 Al) as applied to claim 12 above, and further in view of Miao et al. (US Patent 6,279,022 B1). Applicatns respectfully traverse these rejections.

Claims 14-20 have been rejected in the manner of claim 1 and those depending therefrom. Accordingly, claims 14-20 are patentably distinguishable from the combination of Steele et al. and Niao et al. for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Applicant believes this application and the claims herein to be in a condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have further inquiry concerning these matters, please contact the below named attorney for Applicant.

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